

**STATE OF MONTANA**  
**BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS AND PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS**  
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**CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES**  
**LICENSED SOCIAL WORKERS AND LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS**

**REQUIREMENT:**

- 20 clock hours of accredited continuing education required per year. The period will extend from January 1st through December 31st.
- If newly licensed before July 1 of the renewal year, 20 clock hours of accredited continuing education required for the first year of renewal.
- If newly licensed between July 1 and October 1 of the renewal year, 10 clock hours of accredited continuing education required for the first year of renewal.
- If newly licensed after October 1 of the renewal year, continuing education will not be required for the first year of renewal.
- Even though there is a 60-day grace period to renew a license, this time is not for the purpose of acquiring continuing education. The grace period is only for the purpose of having continuing education verified and submitting renewal fees.
- The continuing education requirement only applies to licensees. CE will only be accepted after the original date of licensure.
- A licensee who completes more than 20 hours of CE may carry forward the excess hours in an amount not to exceed 20 hours. The licensee is responsible for keeping track of the carry-over hours. Examples:
  - If 26.75 hours are completed in a renewal year, 6.75 hours can be carried over to the next renewal cycle.
  - If 40.00 hours are completed in a renewal year, 20.00 hours may be carried forward.

**WAYS TO EARN CREDIT:**

- Attendance at a workshop or conference that has been granted approval by the Board Office. The licensee is responsible for determining if a workshop/conference has been approved.
- Attendance at a workshop or conference that is approved for CE credit by another state social work/counseling licensing board.
- Attendance at any NASW or NBCC approved or sponsored CE offering.
- Attendance at academic social work/counseling-related classes or workshops offered by accredited colleges or universities.
- A maximum of 10 clock hours may be earned for the first time preparation and presentation of a new course, in-service training, workshop or seminar which is related to the enhancement of social work/counseling practice, values, skills and knowledge
- A maximum of 10 clock hours may be earned for the preparation by the author or authors of a professional social work/counseling paper published for the first time in a recognized professional journal or given for the first time at a statewide or national professional meeting, or have a book published.
- Home study courses by approved providers are also considered.

**APPROVAL PROCESS:**

- All continuing education must be submitted to the Board Office to obtain a program number and be posted on the web site.
- A Continuing Education Approval Request Form must accompany all programs INITIALLY submitted for approval. Approval is good for one calendar year.
- Submit one copy of the Continuing Education Approval Form with an outline, agenda, brochure, or syllabus that shows the times and content of the course. A short vita on the presenters of the course is also requested.
- Upon receipt of the Approval Request Form and accompanying information, the Board Office will evaluate the program and if approved, assign a program number.
- The evaluation and information will be posted on our web site at: [www.discoveringmontana.com/dli/swp](http://www.discoveringmontana.com/dli/swp)
- After this process is completed, it does not need to be done again - the program is approved for one calendar year for any attendee.
- If the program is denied, an appeal for full board review may be made.
- The current list of approved programs may be obtained from the Board Office or by viewing the web site at: [www.discoveringmontana.com/dli/swp](http://www.discoveringmontana.com/dli/swp) Click on "Select a Board Topic" and scroll to "Continuing Education"
- If the program is offered annually, it must be submitted again the beginning of each calendar year.

**PROOF OF ATTENDANCE:**

- **Sponsors** of programs **are responsible** for issuing to licensees who attend the conference a "proof of attendance". This may be a letter, signed by the sponsor, or a certificate of completion, which shows the title of the workshop, the name of the licensee attending, the dates of the conference, the clock hours earned by the attendee, and the program number assigned by the Board Office.
- The licensee is responsible for submitting a copy of the "proof of attendance" along with the CE report form to the Board office if audited.
- It is **strongly** recommended that each licensee keep copies of documentation verifying attendance at workshops or any activities listed for continuing education clock hours.
- It is the responsibility of the licensee to maintain and provide evidence of completion of the continuing education requirement.
- **If selected for audit** for compliance with the CE requirement, the licensee is responsible for submitting the documentation.

**CLOCK HOURS:**

- Time allowed for continuing education activities is to be submitted in clock hours, disallowing time for registration and breaks, except for example, a luncheon or dinner speaker.
- Total clock hours should be rounded off to the nearest hour.
- One college or university quarter hour credit translates to 10.0 clock hours
- One semester credit is equal to 15.0 clock hours.

**WAIVER DUE TO ILLNESS AND/OR AGE:**

- A licensee may apply for an exemption from the CE requirement if a physician's certified statement is presented that the licensee was physically incapacitated to the extent that the continuing education requirement could not be satisfied within the previous license period.
- Any licensee over the age of 70 may apply for an exemption from the CE requirements by filing a statement with the Board setting forth good faith reasons why he or she is unable to comply with the rules and an exemption may be granted by the Board.

**STANDARDS FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION:**

The following standards are set forth by the Board of Social Work Examiners and Professional Counselors and should help determine appropriate CE activities to submit to the Committee. The standards shall govern the approval of continuing social work education and professional counselor education activities by the Board.

1. They shall have significant intellectual or practical content, and the primary objective shall be to increase the participant's professional competence as a social worker or professional counselor.
2. They shall constitute an organized program of learning dealing with matters directly related to the practice of social work/professional counseling, professional responsibility or ethical obligations of social workers and professional counselors.
3. Providing or receiving consultation and supervision does not constitute CE. In-service training will only be accepted from approved organizations.

**DEFINITIONS:**

- Refer to Section 37-22-102 (5), MCA for the definition of Social Work.
- Refer to Section 37-23-102 (3), MCA for the definition of Professional Counseling.